

opc Bulletin

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA, NEW YORK, NY • May 2010

A "Fabulous" Night for Journalism and the OPC

EVENT RECAP: APRIL 22

by Aimee Vitrak

OPC President Allan Dodds Frank said the reporters were fabulous and their work was fabulous and the event was fabulous. He said using other words like "sensational" might have a mixed meaning in a roomful of journalists. He was right on all counts, and it was a great evening.

The 2009 OPC Awards was held for a fifth year at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel on the 36th floor, overlooking panoramic views of Central Park and Columbus Circle. What was different about this year's awards was the pre-party sponsored by Microsoft that took place at the bar on the 35th floor, with spectacular views of the Park and the setting sun. It was packed with journalists catching up with one another and vying for cocktails and appetizers.

At 7, the lights blinked at the bar and people made their way to the 36th floor. Before the dinner began, Frank welcomed everyone to the event and introduced David Rohde of *The New York Times* who lit the candle in honor of the journalists killed last year in the line of duty. Rohde and an Afghan reporter/translator Sultan Munadi, were kidnapped by the Taliban in



Andy Rooney received the OPC's highest honor, the President's Award. Here, Rooney shares a laugh during his speech as OPC President Allan Dodds Frank looks on.

November 2008 as they were on their way to interview a Taliban commander near Kabul. Munadi was killed, and Rohde was held captive for seven months until he made a stunning escape in June 2009 by taking advantage of sleeping guards and jumping from a second story, dropping down a 20 foot wall with a rope. Rohde said while foreign correspondents face dangers, it is the local correspondents who are most at risk.

"Sultan's death shows an underlying reality that we all know, local journalists face vastly more dangers than foreign cor-

respondents," he said. "Across the world, local journalism is thriving...but they face more danger than ever."

Rohde is now working with CPJ and the DART Center to find ways to prevent kidnapping and to help journalists' families learn how to respond to kidnappings when they occur.

"Each kidnapping case is different. In certain cases, where government might respond to external public pressure such as Iran, publicity clearly helps. In others, such as mine, where militants are

(Continued on Page 10)

Johnson's New Book Digs Deeply Into History

EVENT PREVIEW: MAY 11

by Sonya K. Fry

When trying to understand the collision of Islam and the West, the narrative usually goes back to the U.S.-backed Islamic insurgency in Afghanistan against the Russians.

It was the usual Cold War scenario. But Ian Johnson dug deeper into history to the end of World War II and the start



Ian Johnson

of the Cold War in his book *A Mosque in Munich*.

A group of Muslims defected from the Soviet Union to Germany during World War II and German agents fashioned this group into an anti-Soviet propaganda machine. At the end of the War, as West German and U.S. intelligence operatives vied for control of this inscrutable but influential Muslim community

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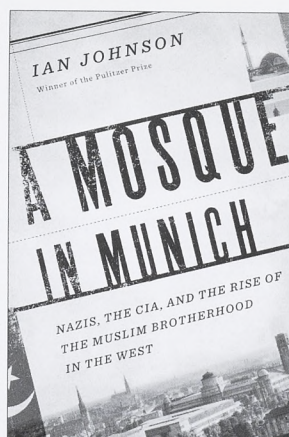
— with a quiet mosque in Munich at the center of their covert struggle — radical Islam gained a beachhead in the West. The CIA was instrumental in bringing in a group of better educated Muslims from Egypt where they had just been banned. This Munich centered group was now called the Muslim Brotherhood.

Ian Johnson, an OPC member, OPC Hal Boyle Award winner and Pulitzer Prize winning *Wall Street Journal* reporter spent five years researching, interviewing survivors, scouring archives, including newly declassified documents. The result is a picture of a naïve CIA using Islam to fight Communism and how the short sighted use of one political group

against another produces unintended consequences in the future.

Johnson uncovers an array of crazy colorful stories: a brilliant Nazi linguist, a CIA man who's a nudist and a radical Muslim on the l a.m. ... and he weaves them together to create a beautifully written look at the history of the interface between Islam and the West in the 20th century.

Adam Hochschild writes: "I thought I knew something about blow-back: the way U.S. support for anti-Soviet Muslim militants in Afghanistan two decades earlier came back to haunt



us on September 11, 2001. But Ian Johnson has unearthed an extraordinary episode of similarly disastrous American judgment that begins well over half a century ago, whose full consequences we've not yet seen. It's a chilling piece of history few people know, and he tells the story with a novelist's skill."

The Book Night on Tuesday, May 11 at 6 p.m. is co-sponsored by South

Asian Journalists Association (SAJA). Books will be available for purchase and signing. RSVP to the OPC office 212-626-9220 or on the OPC website www.opcofamerica.org.

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Active Resident

Taylor Clarke
Duke University
Student

Richard Goldstein
Writer
Active Resident

Elizabeth Koraca
Reporter/Producer
Reuters
Active Resident -
Young

Dan Kurzman
Author/Journalist
Active Resident -
Retired
Reinstated

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Joel Whitney
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Young

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The **\$25 credit** at Club Quarters restaurants and bars at its Midtown, 40 West 45 Street, or at any CQ hotel in the U.S. and in London **expires in June.**

To take advantage of the offer, simply show your OPC membership card. When making a reservation in a hotel, show your card upon registration at the hotel.

*Offer is for each individual OPC member and is not transferrable.

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2009 AWARDS AND WINNERS

HAL BOYLE AWARD

Best newspaper or news service reporting from abroad

FARNAZ FASSIHI

The Wall Street Journal

"Hearts, Minds and Blood: The Battle for Iran"

CITATION:

David Rohde
The New York Times
"Held by the Taliban"

BOB CONSIDINE AWARD

Best newspaper or news service interpretation of international affairs

RAJIV CHANDRASEKARAN,

KAREN DeYOUNG,

BOB WOODWARD

The Washington Post

"Obama's War"

CITATION:

The New York Times Staff
The New York Times
"Upheaval in Iran"

ROBERT CAPA GOLD MEDAL AWARD

Best published photographic reporting from abroad requiring exceptional courage and enterprise

KHALIL HAMRA

Associated Press

"War in Gaza"

CITATION:

Walter Astrada
Agence France-Presse/Getty Images
"Bloodbath in Madagascar"

OLIVIER REBBOT AWARD

Best photographic reporting from abroad in magazines or books

DAVID BURNETT, photographer; ROBERT PLEDGE and JACQUES MENASCHE, editors
National Geographic Books / Focal Point in cooperation with Contact Press Images

"44 Days: Iran and the Remaking of the World"

AND

ALVARO YBARRA ZAVALA
Reportage by Getty Images

"The Gunmen of the Bolivarian Revolution"

THE JOHN FABER AWARD

Best photographic reporting from abroad in newspapers or news services

SARAH L. VOISIN

The Washington Post

"In Mexico's War on Drugs, Battle Lines are Drawn in Chalk"

CITATION:

Tyler Hicks
The New York Times
"Swat Valley"

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

Best feature photography published in any medium on an international theme

Q. SAKAMAKI

Redux Pictures/Time

"Xinjiang: Shifting Sands"

LOWELL THOMAS AWARD

Best radio news or interpretation of international affairs

SORAYA SARHADDI NELSON,

LAUREN JENKINS,

DOUGLAS ROBERTS

National Public Radio

"Afghanistan: Nightmares and Dreams of a Nation at War"

CITATION:

Eric Westervelt and David Gilkey
National Public Radio
"Israel's Barrier"

DAVID KAPLAN AWARD

Best TV spot news reporting from abroad

DAVID MARTIN, MARY

WALSH, ROB BLACHE,

KEN CRUMP,

WARD SLOANE, RICK KAPLAN

CBS Evening News

"The Battle of Wanat"

CITATION:

Orla Guerin, Rome Hartman, Richard Colebourn, Kamil Dayan Khan
BBC World News America
"Pakistan's War"

EDWARD R. MURROW AWARD

Best TV interpretation or documentary on international affairs

MARCELA GAVIRIA and

MARTIN SMITH for *Rain Media*

DAVID FANNING for *Frontline*

"Obama's War"

CITATION:

Pamela Yates, Paco de Onis, Peter Kinoy
Skylight Pictures for American Documentary / POV on PBS
"The Reckoning: The Battle for the International Criminal Court"

ED CUNNINGHAM AWARD

Best magazine reporting from abroad

ALISSA J. RUBIN

The New York Times

Magazine

"How Baida Wanted to Die"

CITATION:

Adam Hochschild
Freelance for The New York Review of Books
"Rape of the Congo"

THOMAS NAST AWARD

Best cartoons on international affairs

NATE BEELER

The Washington Examiner

CITATION:

Clay Bennett
Chattanooga Times Free Press

MORTON FRANK AWARD

Best business reporting from abroad in magazines

MICHAEL LEWIS

Vanity Fair

"Wall Street on the Tundra"

CITATION:

Joshua Hammer
Fast Company
"Bloody Shame"

MALCOLM FORBES AWARD

Best business reporting from abroad in newspapers or news services

KEITH BRADSHAW

The New York Times

"Green China"

CITATION:

The New York Times Staff
The New York Times
"China's Uneasy Engagement"

CORNELIUS RYAN AWARD

Best non-fiction book on international affairs

DAVID FINKEL

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

"The Good Soldiers"

CITATION:

Patrick Radden Keefe
Doubleday
"The Snakehead"

MADLINE DANE ROSS AWARD

Best international reporting in the print medium showing a concern for the human condition

ABIGAIL HAWORTH

Marie Claire

"Forced to be Fat"

CITATION:

Elliott Woods
Virginia Quarterly Review
"Hope's Coffin"

CARL SPIELVOGEL AWARD

Best international reporting in the broadcast media showing a concern for the human condition

LEON GELLER, MARCUS

VETTER, TOM CASCIATO,

NINA CHAUDRY, JEFF

SEELBACH, AARON

BROWN

Thirteen/WNET.org

"Wide Angle: Heart of Jenin"

CITATION:

Jon Alpert, Peter Kwong, Michelle Mi, Matthew O'Neill, Ming Xia
HBO and Downtown Community Television Center
"China's Unnatural Disaster: The Tears of Sichuan Province"

JOE and LAURIE DINE AWARD

Best international reporting in any medium dealing with human rights

MAZIAR BAHARI

Newsweek

"118 Days in Hell"

CITATIONS:

Monica Gamsey, Arash Sahami, Ken Dornstein, David Fanning, Sharon Tiller
Frontline / WGBH
"A Death in Tehran"
Barbara Demick
Los Angeles Times
"China's Broken Families"
Ravi Nessman, AP
"Sri Lanka's Civil War"

WHITMAN BASSOW AWARD

Best reporting in any medium on international environmental issues

JASON GALE

Bloomberg Markets

"Sanitation Nightmare"

CITATION:

Perry Beeman
Des Moines Register/ International Reporting Project
"Renewal in Rwanda"

ROBERT SPIERS BENJAMIN AWARD

Best reporting in any medium on Latin America

JON LEE ANDERSON

The New Yorker

"Gangland"

CITATION:

William Booth and Steve Fainaru
The Washington Post
"Mexico at War"

ONLINE JOURNALISM AWARD

Best web coverage of international affairs

T. CHRISTIAN MILLER,

DOUG SMITH, PRATAP

CHATTERJEE

ProPublica

"Disposable Army"

CITATION:

CFR.org and MediaStorm
"Crisis Guide: The Global Economy"

OPC Awards

Photo Album by
David Wentworth



Jeff Fager, executive producer of "60 minutes" and Kimberly Dozier, the new AP intelligence correspondent and this year's awards presenter.



From left: Audrey Topping, Martha Rooney and Andy Rooney at the first-ever OPC pre-party sponsored by Microsoft.



Olivier Rebbot Award winners from left: Jacques Menasche, David Burnett, and Robert Pledge.



At the pre-dinner cocktail reception from left: award winners Maziar Bahari and Farnaz Fassihi, Babak Dehghanpisheh and Matt McAllester.



This year, the OPC held the pre-party on the 35th floor of the Mandarin Oriental hotel in MObar.



From left: Will Cohen, Martin Smith, Marcela Gaviria and Timothy Grucza who worked on "Obama's War," which garnered this year's Edward R. Murrow Award.



Abigail Haworth, third from left, won The Madeline Dane Ross Award for her article in *Marie Claire* "Forced to be Fat." Here she and colleagues celebrate at the pre-party.

For more photos, go to www.opcofamerica.org



PEOPLE... with Al Kaff

GORDON CURRIE/BILL SHINN

MURDERS: The body of **Enrique Villicana Palomares**, a columnist with the *Voice of Michoacan* newspaper in Mexico, was found April 10 with his throat slit. He was reported missing a week earlier when he failed to arrive for a university writing course that he teaches. He was the fifth journalist killed in Mexico this year.

Patient Chibeya, a cameraman with Radio Television Nationale Congolese, was shot dead around 10 p.m. on April 5 after he got off a motorcycle taxi in front of his home in Beni, Democratic Republic of Congo. He was approached by seven armed men in military fatigues and handed over to them his mobile phone and some money, but they shot him four times. A colleague said Chibeya, who often filmed official events, may have possessed footage damaging to someone.

David Dodge, director of the International Press Institute: "At present, Honduras is the most dangerous country in the world for journalists." Radio Excelsior journalists **José Bayardo Mairena Ramirez**, 52, and **Manuel Juárez**, 55, were driving from Catacamas in eastern Honduras March 26 after hosting a radio program when their vehicle was ambushed by unknown gunmen who sprayed their car with bullets and fatally shot them at close range. **Joseph Hernández Ochoa**, 24, a journalism student at the University of Honduras and a former presenter on a private TV station, shot and killed while traveling in a car on March 1, and wounded was fellow passenger **Carol Cabrera**, a radio broadcaster whose 16-year-old pregnant daughter was fatally shot last year; **David Meza Montesinos**, 51, a reporter on radio station El Patio for more than 30



David Meza Montesinos

years, fatally shot from another vehicle while driving home on March 11; and **Nahúm Palacios Arteaga**, 36, news director of TV channel Canal 5 in Aguán, shot and killed March 14 when his car was riddled by 42 bullets that also wounded two persons traveling with him.

Clodomiro Castilla, editor of the Colombian magazine *El Pulso del Tiempo* and a radio reporter, was shot dead by an unidentified gunman on a motorcycle March 19 while he was reading on the terrace of his home. Castilla was known for his reporting on politicians with links to paramilitary death squads.

In Mexico, **Evaristo Pacheco Solis**, 33, a reporter for the Mexican weekly *Visión Informative*, was found shot dead on March 12 in Chilpancingo, state capital of Guerrero, where 28 people, including drug traffickers and police, were killed the same day.

KIDNAPPINGS: **Abdul Karim Mohamed Hersi**, a reporter with Radio Holy Koran in Somalia, was kidnapped by armed insurgents March 27 as he was preparing to broadcast the news and released five days later. The kidnappers were members of the Islamic insurgent group Al Shabab which controls most of south and central Somalia. The radio journalist was believed kidnapped because of a comment he made during a news program the day he was seized.

In Nigeria, armed attackers stopped a bus carrying journalists to an airport in the Niger Delta Region on March 1 and kidnapped three of them from the African sports network M-Net SuperSport. A fourth journalist was shot during the kidnapping and taken to a hospital. Kidnapped were cameraman **Alexander Effiong**, commentator **Bowie Attamah** and sound engineer **Nick Greyling**. Effiong escaped the next day, Attamah was released on March 5 and Greyling was freed on March 8. They were being held for ransom, but news reports did not disclose if ransom was paid.

AMSTERDAM: Dutch investigative reporter **Alberto Stegeman** said he successfully smuggled a refilled liquor bottle through security at Schiphol Airport and boarded a flight to London where he transferred to a flight to Washington. Security at the airport had been heightened since a young Nigerian with explosives in his underwear boarded a flight for the United States at that airport last December. In a March television broadcast, Stegeman said he bought a bottle of rum at a duty-free shop at the airport, emptied it, refilled the bottle with water and took it through security checks to a plane that landed in London, where he transferred to a flight to Washington.

BANGKOK: **Hiroyuki Muramoto**, 43, a Thomson Reuters photographer on assignment from Tokyo, was killed April 10 during fighting between army, police and Red Shirt anti-government demonstrators. Muramoto died from a gunshot in his chest. Seventeen other people were killed during that day's rioting, and more than 650 others were wounded including two news photographers.

BEIJING: After 13 years with *The Wall Street Journal*, OPC member **Ian Johnson** has left the newspaper but will remain in Beijing as a freelance correspondent. He is on retainer with *The New York Times*, will write for magazines such as the *National Geographic*, work on a new book and pursue a PhD in religious studies at Leipzig University in Germany, where he formerly was based.

In an e-mail to **Sonya Fry**, OPC executive director, Johnson wrote, "After nearly 30 years in daily journalism, I felt it was time to make a change. I learned a lot at the *Journal*, especially how to write longer feature stories." The OPC will feature Johnson and his latest book, *A Mosque in Munich* at a Book Night on May 11, details page 1.

(Continued on Page 6)

Twelve American editors and producers, including OPC board member **Rana Foroohar**, *Newsweek* senior editor, are spending two weeks in China in May under fellowships awarded by the Washington-based International Reporting Project to

study economics, development, health, environment, education, agriculture and media. The others fellows are **William Dermody, Jr.**, world news editor, *USA Today*; **Ann Derry**, editorial director, video/TV, *New York Times*; **Christy George**, senior producer, Oregon Public Broadcasting; **Mark Higgins**, metro editor, *Seattle Times*; **Douglas Jehl**, foreign editor, *The Washington Post*; **George Judson**, managing editor, "Marketplace;" **Ed Kelley**, editor, *The Oklahoman*; **Elizabeth Krist**, senior photo editor, *National Geographic*; **Trudy Rubin**, foreign affairs columnist, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*; **Stuart Seidel**, deputy managing editor, news, National Public Radio; and **Peter Thomson**, environment editor, "The World" PRI/BBC. The program is administered by OPC member **John Schidlovsky** at Johns Hopkins University.



Rana Foroohar

Zhang Hong, deputy editor of the Chinese weekly *Economic Observer*, was forced out of his job after he criticized China's household registration system that restricts where people can live. Zhang's editorial, published in his newspaper and a dozen other publications, said the registration system unfairly restricted the rights of Chinese to seek a better life outside their hometowns.

BEIRUT: Former anchorwoman **May Chidiac**, a critic of Syria's political sway over Lebanon who was nearly killed in an assassination attempt, was named the 54th World Press Freedom Hero by the International Press Institute in March. A bomb detonated on

September 25, 2005 when Chidiac entered her car in Jounieh Lebanon, gravely injuring her. Part of her left arm and left leg were amputated. After treatment and surgery, Chidiac, a defender of press freedom and independent reporting, returned to her TV show at Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation in 2006 but resigned last year.

ISTANBUL: **Vedat KurSun**, former editor of the Kurdish daily *Azadiya Welat* (Independent Homeland), was sentenced to three years in prison March 31 in connection with two articles deemed to have spread propaganda for the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, which is considered a terrorist organization by Turkey. He faces 525 years in prison after being charged with 105 counts of "spreading propaganda" and "glorifying crimes and criminals" in articles published in the newspaper.



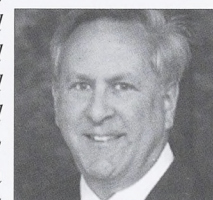
Vedat KurSun

JERUSALEM: Israel partly lifted a gag order on the trial of journalist **Anat Kam**, 23, in April. She is charged with stealing more than 2,000 military documents during her compulsory army service and passing them to **Uri Blau**, a reporter for the daily *Haaretz* who used them for a series of articles in that newspaper. In one article Blau wrote that the military had identified three Palestinian militants as targets for assassination. State prosecutors said some of the documents were "highly confidential." But Kam's lawyer and the editor-in-chief of *Haaretz* said the newspaper articles in question were passed by Israel's military censor and approved for publication. Kam started working for a Jerusalem weekly while in high school and after her military service worked for Walla!, an Israeli Web site.

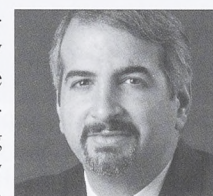
NEW YORK: OPC Executive Director **Sonya Fry** and **Jaroslav Wlodarczyk**, president of the Press Club Polska in Warsaw, exchanged messages after Polish President Lech Kaczynski, his wife and dozens of Polish officials were killed in an April 10 plane crash. Fry: "Please accept the deep condolences of your colleagues at

the Overseas Press Club of America in New York City. Losing your President and his wife along with many other members of the military and the government is so tragic. We have many Polish emigrants living in New York City and we can see in their eyes and tears that their homeland is a powerful force in their lives. I also personally send my prayers and sorrow at this tragedy for your country." Jaroslaw's reply: "It is really very sad time now in Poland. For me it is also very hard personally because I lost 5 good friends there. Thank you for your prayers."

The Pulitzer Prizes were announced in April. OPC member **David E. Hoffman** won the general non-fiction Pulitzer for his book *The Dead Hand: The Untold Story of the Cold War Arms Race and Its Dangerous Legacy*. He is a *Washington Post* contributing editor and the paper's former Moscow bureau chief. The Pulitzer for international reporting went to **Anthony Shadid** for his *Washington Post* reports from the Iraq War. He now is a *New York Times* reporter.



David E. Hoffman



Anthony Shadid

Marcus Mabry, the OPC's second vice president, has a new job at *The New York Times*. In an April 1 e-mail to **Bill Holstein**, Mabry reported, "As of Monday, I'll be the former international business editor. My new title will be associate national editor, managing domestic correspondents and helping direct our coverage of politics, the midterm campaign, race and demographics." Before joining *The Times* in 2007, Mabry spent 19 years with *Newsweek* including Africa bureau chief and Paris correspondent.

OPC board member **Chrystia Freeland** left the *Financial Times* in March and now is on book leave before joining Thomson Reuters in the autumn. Born in Canada, Chrystia has worked in Kiev, Moscow, London and Toronto. Her replacement as the U. S. managing editor of *Financial Times* is British-born **Gillian Tett**, who previously oversaw the paper's global coverage of financial markets after reporting from the former Soviet Union, Europe and Japan. Last year, she was named Journalist of the Year at the British Press Awards.



Chrystia Freeland

◆
Richard L. Berke, an assistant managing editor at *The New York Times*, became national editor March 22, replacing **Suzanne M. Daley**, a former foreign correspondent. Daley, 53, was the *Times* South Africa bureau chief, based in Johannesburg from 1995 to 1999, Paris bureau chief 1999 to 2002, then education editor and, since 2005, national editor. She returned to writing about Europe. Berke, 51, was a *Times* Washington correspondent and editor before moving to New York in 2005.

◆
After two decades with CNN, **Christiane Amanpour**, CNN's chief international correspondent, will move to ABC News in August to host "This Week," the network's Sunday morning public affairs program. Amanpour, an OPC member, said she had no disagreements with CNN but ABC's offer was a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity." In an e-mail message to staffers,



Christiane Amanpour

Jim Walton, president of CNN Worldwide, said of Amanpour, "Her work burnished our news brand and gave it authority... CNN and Christiane helped make each other great." At ABC News, she will fill the seat left vacant since December

when **George Stephanopoulos** moved from "This Week" to "Good Morning America."

QUETTA, Pakistan: **Malik Arif**, a Samaa TV cameraman, was among at least 10 people killed April 9 when a bomb exploded at the Civil Hospital. A reporter, **Noor Elahi Bugti**, was among at least 50 people injured in the blast of an estimated 15 kilos of explosives. The journalists were at the hospital to cover the murder of a local bank manager.

SEOUL: Veteran Asia broadcast journalist **Steve Herman** has assumed his new assignment as Northeast Asia bureau chief for the Voice of America, based in Seoul. For the past three years, Steve, an OPC member, has been based in New Delhi as VOA's South Asia bureau chief covering a six-nation region plus occasional assignments in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Seoul, Herman's primary focus will be on reporting about North Korea. You can follow Steve's reporting via Twitter @W7VOA (also his U.S. ham radio call sign).



Steve Herman

SINGAPORE: The New York Times Company settled a claim by Singapore government leaders that they were smeared by an op-ed article in *The International Herald Tribune* written by freelance contributor **Philip Bowring**. The article referred to the "dynastic politics" of several countries and listed their leaders including Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and his father, former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. *The IHT* is owned by the Times Company. Bowring agreed to pay the Lees 160,000 Singapore dollars (about U.S.\$114,000) and published an apology on March 24, saying it did not mean to infer that the younger Lee did not achieve his position through merit.

SYRACUSE, New York: After 20 years as a *New York Times* reporter **David Burnham** and a Syracuse University professor started an Internet site that carries a wide range of reports including immigration issues. Burnham

now is co-director of the site named Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC). In a message to the *OPC Bulletin*, Burnham wrote: "We get data out of the government and post it to our site — <http://trac.syr.edu> — so that reporters and others can get a handle on federal government operations. We have just posted a new report that provides previously unavailable information about all the immigration matters pending in the immigration court as of January and the average number of days they have been pending. On the free site a user can get this data by any nationality."

TIRASPOL, Moldova: Independent journalist **Ernest Vardanian** was arrested in front of his home April 7 and accused of espionage and treason by men who identified themselves as secret service agents of the Transnistria region of Moldova, a former Soviet Union state. But members of the Moldovan government called for his release. Vardanian is known for his critical reporting on state officials.

VIENNA: Former editor of the Sri Lankan newspaper *The Sunday Leader*, **Lasantha Wickrematunge**, who was shot dead last year, has been posthumously declared a World Press Freedom Hero by the International Press Institute. He was shot by unidentified assailants on January 8, 2009 near Colombo and died a few hours later. "Police have not made any headway into solving the crime," said his brother **Lal Wickrematunge**, chairman of Leader Publications which includes *The Sunday Leader*. The slain editor will be one of 60 World Press Freedom Heroes to be honored at the IPI World Congress in September.



Lasantha Wickrematunge

WASHINGTON: The website WikiLeaks.org released a video April 5 that shows an American helicopter shooting and killing Reuters photographer **Namir Noor-Eldeen**, 22, and his driver, **Saeed Chmagh**, 40, during a

(Continued on Page 8)

(Continued From Page 7)

2007 attack in Baghdad. A U.S. military official confirmed that the video was authentic. **David Schlesinger**, editor-in-chief of Reuters news and an OPC member, said the video was “graphic evidence of the dangers involved in war journalism and the tragedies than can result.” The attack killed 12 people including the Reuters men.

Kimberly Dozier left CBS News in April and joined AP as an intelligence reporter. She was wounded and her cameraman and soundman killed in 2006 when their car was bombed in Iraq. Kimberly “will work with AP reporters around the globe, focusing on stories about the growing security threats against the United States and its allies,” AP Washington bureau chief **Ron Fournier** wrote in a note to staff. Previously based in London, Israel and Cairo, Dozier has covered world events including the Balkan crisis, war in Afghanistan, the hunt for Osama bin Laden and Princess Diana’s death. After recovering from her wounds, Dozier covered the White House, the Pentagon and national security. She presented the awards at the OPC’s Annual Awards Dinner in April.

WEDDING

David J. Reiter, 39, ABC News vice president for news gathering who oversees the network’s national and international bureaus, and **Angela J. Hunter**, 35, senior vice president for programming at Channel One News in New York City, were married March 20 by a rabbi at Angel Orensanz Foundation in New York.



PEOPLE REMEMBERED

Carlos Franqui, 89, a Cuban journalist who supported then opposed Fidel Castro, died April 16 in Puerto Rico after being hospitalized for bronchitis and heart problems. A former editor of the Cuban newspaper *Revolución*, Franqui joined Castro’s rebellion against Fulgencio Batista but openly broke with the Communist government in 1968.

Susan E. Tift, 59, who wrote histories of two newspaper dynasties in collaboration with her husband, **Alex S. Jones**, died of uterine cancer April 1 as her home in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Tift was a writer and editor at *Time* when she joined with her husband, then a media reporter at *The New York Times*, to write the 1991 book *The Patriarch: The Rise and Fall of the Bingham Dynasty*. The Bingham family owned *The Louisville Courier-Journal*. In 1999, Tift and Jones published *The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind the New York Times*. After working for the Democratic National Committee, Tift wrote for *Time* from 1982 to 1991 covering foreign affairs, politics, economics and education.

After discovering that she had cancer in 2007, she started a blog that reported on her disease and its treatment. It was a breezy journal in a style characterized by the byline she used for one entry, “Cancer Chick.” Her last post reads, in part: *Final advice? Always do the right thing. It will gratify your friends and enrage your enemies... I don’t want to go. I love life and I know how blessed I am, especially to have Alex, the love of my life, who taught me you can be serious and still laugh at yourself and at life.*



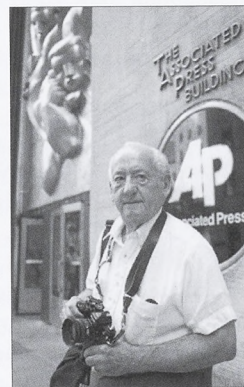
Tift and Alex Jones

Chafur Fadyl, 65, AP’s first Jakarta bureau chief, died April 10 in a Jakarta hospital after years of treatment for cancer and kidney failure. Fadyl joined AP in 1966, and he covered most of the rule of Suharto, Indonesia’s second president, and rebellions in Papua, Aceh and East Timor. In 1997, he was named sales and marketing manager for the Jakarta bureau. Fadyl retired in 2007 after 41 years with the wire service.

Bernie Yudain, 91, a U.S. Army correspondent in Italy with *Stars & Stripes* during World War II and later a Time Inc. executive, died in a

Greenwich, Connecticut hospital April 3. In 1945, Yudain became managing editor of the *Greenwich Time* and later spent 12 years as head of the Time Inc. office in Washington, then with the publisher in New York. Over the years, Yudain worked for *The New York Times* and several Connecticut newspapers.

Marty Lederhandler, 92, a news photographer who covered the 1944 D-Day landing in France and every president from Herbert Hoover to Bill Clinton, died at Hackensack University Medical Center in Hackensack, New Jersey, March 25 after suffering a stroke February 17. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1940, and as a lieutenant led the Signal Corps camera team ashore with the fourth Infantry Division at Utah Beach on June 6, 1944.



Lederhandler joined AP in 1936 and retired from the wire service in 2001 at age 84 after covering news events in New York City and the United Nations. He made one of his last photos on September 11, 2001. Lederhandler was in the AP office when two hijacked airliners crashed into the World Trade Center. He crossed the street, took the elevator to the Rainbow Room restaurant atop the 70-story GE Building and photographed the blazing towers in the distance with the Empire State Building in the foreground, a widely-published photo. His older brother, the late **Harry Lederhandler**, was a photographer with UPI, the rival news agency.

Margaret Moth, 59, a photojournalist who covered conflicts around the world, died of colon cancer March 21 in a Rochester, Minnesota hospice. Born Margaret Wilson in New Zealand, she worked as a camerawoman in that country before moving to the United States



and joining CNN in 1990. She covered the Persian Gulf War, the rioting that followed Indira Gandhi's assassination, the civil war in Georgia and the fighting in Sarajevo in 1992 when she was struck by a sniper's bullet while driving with colleagues to an interview. Her jaw was shattered, and she lost most of her teeth and part of her tongue. After reconstruction surgery, she returned to covering Sarajevo.

A published obituary said Moth was "known for her distinctive looks and bravery." She was a fearless skydiver who changed her surname to Moth because she loved the Tiger Moth aircraft. Diagnosed with cancer more than three years ago, she commented in a 2009 CNN documentary with a laugh, "Dying of cancer, I would have liked to think I'd have gone out with a bit more flair."

Death came to three OPC families during three consecutive days in March. Patricia Main, wife of **Jeremy Main**, retired from *Fortune* magazine and an OPC Foundation board member and member of the OPC's Freedom of the Press Committee, died of cancer March 14 at Yale-New Haven Hospital. Patricia survived cancer in 1994 but it returned this year. OPC members **Roy** and **Helen Rowan**, **Seymour** and **Audrey Topping**, and **Jane Reilly**, OPC Foundation executive director, were among more than 150 guests who gathered April 11 in Ridgefield, Connecticut to celebrate Patricia's life by drinking champagne and sampling her favorite foods. The couple's son Thomas oversaw a program that culminated in the granddaughters' singing their grandmother's beloved English tunes. A London native who survived the World War II Blitz, Patricia would have been charmed by their version of "White Cliffs of Dover."

Fred Reinhold, 80, father of Reuters editor **Toni Reinhold**, an OPC board member and a judge for this year's OPC awards, died of a heart attack March 13. After the powerful nor'easter that dumped torrential rain on the Northeast, Fred was bailing flood water from the home he shared with his wife in Woodbridge, New Jersey. After the pump failed, he went to a store to buy a new pump, and suffered a heart attack in the store. Fred formerly owned an auto repair shop, and he turned to carpentry after retiring. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War.

Irene L. Golden, 91, died March 12 at the Chelsea Jewish Nursing Home in Chelsea, Massachusetts. She was the mother of **Jane Reilly**, executive director of the OPC Foundation. Golden was the widow of George H. Golden, and they were married for nearly 50 years.

In 1971, a trapper who lived in isolation in a rainforest on Mindanao island in the Philippines discovered a group of 26 people who lived a stone-age-like existence, living in caves and subsisting on roots and tadpoles. Their unique language did not include words for enemy or war.

John E. Nance, AP's Manila bureau chief, reported on aviation pioneer Charles Lindberg's expedition to meet these tribesmen known as the Tasaday.

Nance spent the next 40 years writing about and photographing the Tasaday people and working to improve their lives. In the late 1980s, mining and logging interests which wanted to work the Tasaday land tried but failed to claim that the Tasadays were nothing more than a hoax. Nance established Friends of the Tasadays, a foundation that helped preserve their rainforest home after it was cut from 45,000 to 4,000 acres. The foundation taught the cave-dwelling tribe health care and agriculture. Nance wrote three books about the Tasadays and took tens of thousands of photographs of the tribe.

Before the Philippines, Nance reported from Vietnam.

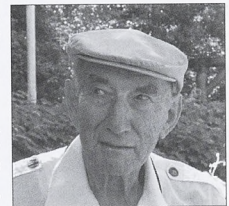


Nance, 74, died of cancer March 9 at his home in Columbus, Ohio. "John Nance represented a generation of great AP reporters who covered the war in Vietnam and then went on to chronicle the incredible story of the Stone Age people in the Philippines," said **John Daniszewski**, AP senior managing editor for international news.

Gerald Flamm, 93, a former correspondent and public relations man in Latin America, died of pneumonia March 8 in a Stanford, California hospital. From 1940 to 1941, he was a reporter in the United Press and *New York Herald Tribune* bureaus in Mexico City.

After serving as a U.S. Marine officer in the invasions of Guam and Okinawa during World War II, Flamm joined the *San Francisco Call-Bulletin* as a reporter and later worked in public relations in South America and Puerto Rico, the California State Assembly, office of the San Francisco mayor and the Teamsters union.

Flamm wrote two books: *Good Life in Hard Times* about the Bay Area during the Great Depression and *Hometown San Francisco* that contained biographical sketches of local people.



OPC member **Michael B. Silver**, 73, a former NBC News producer, correspondent and bureau manager, died of melanoma at his home in Hoboken, New Jersey, last December 8. Before retiring in 1996, Michael spent 30 years as a producer, correspondent and bureau chief for NBC News in New York and abroad.

His postings included Tokyo, Rome, Amman and Frankfurt. He covered the Middle East conflict from Beirut during most of the 1980s and continued to report from war zones until the Gulf War. He played football while attending the University of Florida.

A “Fabulous” Night for Journalism and the OPC

(OPC Awards Continued From Page 1)

involved, publicity can hurt. Each case should be examined on a case-by-case basis and the wishes of the families involved should always be respected.”

Kimberly Dozier, most recently correspondent for CBS News Washington bureau and is now the new Associated Press intelligence correspondent, was the awards presenter this year.

“I thank colleagues who’ve overcome not just the dangers of the front lines, but other perils like talking bosses into covering stories in a shrinking news budgets, and also winning back an audience that is sometimes distracted,” she said. “What you do reminds them that there is a world out there that needs their attention, sometimes their help and also puts their own problems into perspective. For that we thank you, your bosses and the OPC for recognizing them.”

Farnaz Fassihi won The Hal Boyle Award for her courageous reporting of the unfolding drama in Iran where she covered the opposition’s protests from the perspectives of doctors, students, and even a member of the feared Basij militia who beat demonstrators and broke up marches in the bloody aftermath of the Islamic Republic’s disputed presidential election.

“[The Iranian government] was spreading a rumor that she had been shot. An arrest warrant had been prepared for me,” she said. “As I stand here safe and accept this award I’d like to thank you and think that by honoring me you have also honored them.”

A call for stories from the people, not just the headlines and news makers, was sounded by Fassihi and other award winners, like Soraya Sarhaddi Nelson who accepted The Lowell Thomas Award for the segment she did with Lauren Jenkins and Douglas Roberts for “Afghanistan: Nightmares and Dreams of a Nation at War.” Nelson was a print journalist and joined NPR in 2006 and serves as NPR’s bureau chief in Afghanistan. She said that Afghanistan is a place where journalists can do great story telling. She speaks Farsi and has traveled to 26 of the 34 provinces meeting with Afghans.

“We get caught in the loop of Karzai government vs. the U.S. military vs. the Taliban,” she said. “There are a lot of reporters who are now coming to



A rapt audience listens to the award ceremony.

Afghanistan and I hope that in the midst to tell the breaking news story ... that we don’t lose focus of the people. If you tell their stories, you’ll have a greater understanding for why things are as complex and why things might not be going so well for us as we’d like in Afghanistan.”

Jon Lee Anderson won The Robert Spiers Benjamin Award for his work in the *The New Yorker*, “Gangland,” but was unable to attend because of a reporting assignment. Amy Davidson, his editor from *The New Yorker* accepted the OPC Award on his behalf. Another winner was sidetracked from attending the awards gala because of the disruption in flights from the volcano eruption in Iceland. Alissa J. Rubin, who won The Ed Cunningham Award for her piece in the *The New York Times Magazine* “How Baida Wanted to Die,” explores the background, motivation and training of one of 16 would-be female suicide bomber in Iraq. Rubin’s husband, James Castello, delivered remarks she prepared.

“I was very sorry not to be here with you tonight and it seems, amazingly ironic, that as soon as I made it out of the deadly Korengal Valley in Afghanistan on the first leg of my journey to New York, only to be stranded in Paris,” she wrote. “It is a great and unexpected honor, and I thank the Overseas Press Club and my translator Anwar Jabbar who risked as much as I did in reporting this story. Women translators in war zones are perhaps even less numerous than women correspondents and this was a story whose protagonists would have only shared their thoughts with other women.”

Each award winner provided comments similar to Rubin’s that indicate that international reporting is alive and well,



David Rohde lit the candle in honor of the journalists killed last year.

even as the economic climate among media corporations has been tumultuous in the past few years. They also provided an insight into where journalism is headed, as T. Christian Miller said in his acceptance speech for The Online Journalism Award, the work of ProPublica to produce “Disposable Army” was done by several news organizations and journalists pooling their resources.

Dipping back into journalism’s history, the OPC President’s Award went to America’s columnist, Andy Rooney from *60 Minutes* in recognition of seven decades of reporting, news writing, essays, books and commentary. Rooney has also been a member of the OPC since 1947.

“Gosh, I’ve had such a life. I hope it isn’t over,” Rooney joked.

Frank said that during the interview process of Rooney for the 10-minute video that accompanied his award that he was astounded to learn that if there was an award for not swearing in a newsroom, Rooney would win it.

“That is so true,” Rooney said. “I have never believed in using profanity. That doesn’t make me a wonderful person, but that’s the way I see it.”

See videos of acceptance speeches, photo slideshows and links and photos of the work awarded at www.opcofamerica.org.

Japan Hands Gathering Reunites Friends and Colleagues

EVENT RECAP: MARCH 18

by Aimee Vitrak

More than 70 correspondents who have covered Japan from the 1940s to present day attended the Japan Correspondents Reunion on Thursday, March 18 at Club Quarters in Midtown Manhattan. Those gathered were treated to stories from speakers who relayed their experience in Japan, seeing old friends and eating sushi, soba noodles and roast beef sandwiches along with a full bar that poured (officially) until 9 p.m.

William J. Holstein, one of the event organizers, welcomed everyone to the event that commemorated 65 years of American media coverage of Japan. He said that there have been many talented journalists to have passed through Japan over the years.

"I hope we have been able to penetrate the heart of Japan," he said. "When reporting, it's difficult to hit the right balance."

He introduced the first speaker, Rutherford Poats who was a lieutenant in the Army when he first went to Japan, in December 1945 and stayed on to be in charge of "everything" at United Press. He saw the devastation of Japan from the windows of Army cars.

"It was a scene of utter destruction, insinuated homes, windowless buildings," he said. "Yet when we settled down, we saw almost no hostility toward the Americans. Compare that with today's concept of 'foreign invaders,' like American troops in Iraq. I was in charge of writing the 'non-story' of that time. There was nothing to write about in terms of tension. Instead, I covered the reformation of Japan's economy."

The second speaker, Rafael Steinberg, was posted in Tokyo for International News Service and later *Time* during the 1950s and '60s. He spoke about what has changed between Japan and the United States since his time there, starting off with the nine or so flights required to get him near Japan. The fact that in the 1960s there was only one restaurant in New York that served sushi, but only on Wednesday afternoons. And words like "tatami" would require italics or quotes because many readers would be unfamiliar with the term. Now, direct flights are possible to Japan, nearly every block has a sushi restaurant and tatami no longer requires a separate definition or distinction.

He said in 1965, he wrote an article for *East* magazine with the headline "Why No One Pays Attention to Japan."

"We could not get space in newspapers or magazines because Japanese leaders at the time in politics, sports and business were dull people," he said. "To be a leader in Japan then, you had to be the lowest common denominator. In New York, they only wanted stories with interesting people."

For writing about this, he said he was "persona non-grata" among his Japanese friends. He said he redeemed himself with a report to *The Washington Post* that pointed out the U.S. military in Okinawa was suppressing the people. President Kennedy shifted the power structure as a result. "Many Japanese said, 'you are a real friend of Japan.'" They were also surprised that an American could be critical of the government and still render change. "We were newsmen first, Americans second," Steinberg said.

Mike Tharp, executive editor of the *Merced Sun-Star* in Merced, California, took to the podium next to relay his experiences in Japan in the 1980s with *The Wall Street Journal*.



From left, Bill Holstein, Terrill Jones, Emily Thornton, Fred Katayama and Chester Dawson

He read off a list of carousing nights in Tokyo and the rough housing that went on at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan, the FCCJ bar and the elections of FCCJ during this period.

"While we were working our tails off, we also had fun," he said. "This is during the time when Japan bashing hit its hey day. Our job was to keep the record straight. We did what Carl Bernstein recommended for all journalists, 'get the best attainable version of the truth.' We were witnessing then — between the U.S. and Japanese relations — the same thing we're witnessing now between the U.S. and China."

Eamonn Fingleton, author of *In the Jaws of the Dragon*, came all the way from Tokyo for the reunion to speak about the present journalistic climate in Japan.

"There are almost no foreign correspondents left in Japan," he said. "Nobody serious is there anymore and that's reflected in how Japan has been covered."

He said a recent *IHT* report claimed that Japan was "deflation plagued." "But what do they mean by that?" he asked. "It's the same thing that happened in the U.S. in the '80s and '90s. It's positive deflation."

He said one only need to look around Tokyo and see vibrant signs of consumption. He cited the fact that there are 11 Michelin three-star restaurants in Tokyo, in New York, only four.

Fingleton issued an invitation to debate, a call to arms for the reporters in the room. "Let's have a real discussion about the importance of the West's media coverage of Japan," he said.

Ticket prices to the event were kept to \$60 thanks to the generous support of ITOCHU International Inc. A steering committee that pulled the reunion together included Toshio Aritake, representing the FCC in Tokyo, Al Kaff, United Press correspondent



Aimee Vitrak and Al Kaff met for the first time in their three-year work history on the *Bulletin* and www.opcofamerica.org.

Photos: Sonya K. Fry

(Continued on Page 15)

A Whirl of History for a Major Legend in Journalism

EVENT RECAP: MARCH 23

by Aimee Vitrak

People packed into Club Quarters on Tuesday March 23, and were taken to 1950s China and Saigon, whisked to London, New York and Moscow. This whirlwind trip was courtesy of long-time OPC member Seymour Topping who relayed his experiences on his vast journalistic career and his thoughts on the present state of journalism and world affairs. OPC Foundation President William J. Holstein served as interlocutor.

Topping started the evening at the podium, relaying a few important dates that have stuck with him over the years.

"Some of these dates are burned on my consciousness and I wake up at night thinking about it," said Topping. "The most memorable for me is October 20, 1950."

This is the date that President Harry S. Truman launched the United States into what Topping called the "Saigon morass." On this particular day, Audrey Topping was in a French hospital in Saigon about to deliver their first daughter, Susan. The doctor was with the French Army and Topping suspected he had likely never delivered a child before. Shortly after the delivery, with the baby in her arms, Audrey said, "I'm okay. Go back to work."

Topping went back to the Associated Press office, which was actually a small cubby hole in their tiny apartment above a bar where the French Foreign Legion sang mostly German folk songs all night long. He wrote the story about how from this point forward, Chinese could train Vietnamese troops in South China.

While still in Saigon, the Toppings had a visit by then-Senator John Kennedy and his brother Robert, who were on a "familiarization tour" of South East Asia. Topping recalled Bobby ducking under the wing of the plane looking smiley and boyish, waving at him. John asked if he could stop by and when he arrived he said he'd only stay a few minutes but he ended up staying for more than two hours, asking about every aspect of what was going on in Indochina. He asked what the Vietnamese thought about the United States.

"A year ago, the Vietnamese thought we were wonderful and wanted a similar arrangement that the U.S. had with the Philippines, but that didn't happen. Now they hate us," Topping said, relating what he told to Kennedy, then a member of the House of Representatives.

Topping said that Ho Chi Min made eight appeals to President Truman in the hopes of bridging some political or economic help to become independent. Min was hoping for a similar process that the Philippines had, but Truman never responded. "This could've saved the war in Vietnam and 58,000 American soldiers," Topping said.

The Toppings were then sent to London, as he covered the Korean War. In 1959, he joined *The New York Times*.

"I was told by a Times executive that they had me earmarked to go abroad," he said. "I told them only place I can't go is Moscow because no correspondents had gone before with children, and by this time we had four daughters." Toppings' first stop as a foreign correspondent for the *Times*: Moscow.

During a meeting in New York in 1963, Topping was speaking with Times publisher Arthur Sulzberger on the 14th floor,

hoping to land an assignment in Washington, D.C. Clifton Daniels, managing editor, broke into the meeting and said that President John F. Kennedy has been shot and may be dying.

"We went to the third floor and the place was in an uproar. We didn't have an obit ready," Topping said.

Topping went to work on the foreign relations aspects of Kennedy's biography while Homer Bigart wrote the domestic side. Between 2:30 and 6:30 p.m., the two reporters wrote a full page obituary.

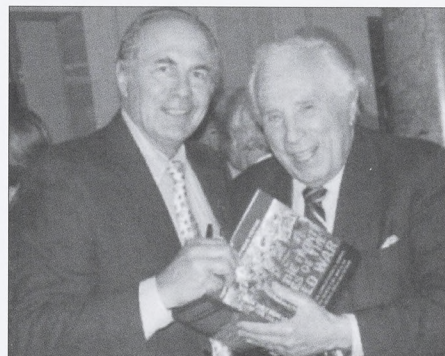
"Then we went to Blick's bar on 40th Street," he said. "Homer said he wanted to call his wife, but when I looked through the glass, he was weeping. So I left him. The lights were down in Times Square and I went to the Astor Hotel and didn't sleep. In the morning, I scribbled about Saigon and what would John Kennedy had done if he had lived."

Topping left the podium and sat with William J. Holstein who asked questions about his coverage of war, Indochina and the current state of journalism and world affairs. Holstein equated the "war on terrorism" with the war against communism and questioned if either "war" should be fought or could be won. Topping said that the greatest shortcomings of Presidents like Truman and George W. Bush is a reluctance to diplomacy.

"There was a certain rigidity, a paralysis of anti-communism where each country has its own interests," Topping said. "From a diplomatic point of view, we can influence, and if nothing else, we can at least know the enemy. Bush refused to do this with Syria and Iran."

Topping said he was pleased that the Obama Administration has changed this policy and reached out to these countries and to less radical wings of the Taliban. "It may not work," Topping said, "but he wants to explore these possibilities."

Now that people are questioning Afghanistan, there's a strong effort to support General McChrystal to reach out to the young



Larry Smith and author Seymour Topping share a laugh before the event.



William J. Holstein served as interlocutor for the book night with Seymour Topping.

(Continued on Page 15)

Iran Drew Saberi In, Its Government Kept Her There

EVENT RECAP: APRIL 5

by Aimee Vitrak

The first U.S. news conference with journalist Roxana Saberi was held on June 30, 2009 and sponsored by the Overseas Press Club of America, the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International-USA. At that time, she had been released from prison a little over a month, so when people at the news conference asked her to speak directly about her experience in prison, she demurred, reminding people she was there to talk about the more than 200 human rights activists, intellectuals, civil society leaders, opposition political activists, students, and journalists who have been arbitrarily detained in Iran since the disputed June 12, 2009 presidential elections.

The book night held on Monday, April 5 at the Times Center then, was a much-anticipated event because Saberi came to speak about her experiences and her book, *Between Two Worlds: My Life and Captivity in Iran*.

OPC member Roger Cohen, a columnist for *The New York Times* and the *International Herald Tribune*, served as the interlocutor. Cohen reported from Tehran during the election upheaval.

How Saberi came to Iran was an interesting story, in that growing up in North Dakota with a Japanese mother and an Iranian father, she said the family took many trips to Japan as she was growing up. Then in February 2003, she moved to Iran to work for U.S.-based Feature Story News and to complete a two-year master's degree in Iranian studies, but then she stayed.

"The people drew me in," Saberi said. "Many Iranians thought it was great that I was learning more about my father's country. You feel like what you're doing is valuable because there aren't many correspondents there."

Cohen asked if she was ever afraid.

"I knew I might be monitored, most journalists are," she said. But on January 31, 2009, when agents escorted her out of her home, she said she told herself it must be a bad dream. "I never thought I'd be imprisoned in Iran. I knew what had happened in Evin to [Iranian-Canadian photojournalist Zahra] Kazemi, who was detained and died there in custody [in 2003]. I was held in solitary confinement in a space that was maybe seven-by-nine feet with a toilet that didn't work and one window at the top with very little ventilation. There was a quote from the Ayatollah Khomeini that read, 'Prisons must be colleges for human improvement.'"

On the first day of questioning, Saberi was asked to "cooperate."

"I was supposed to say my book was espionage and would be used for the U.S. advantage," she said. "They offered to secure my freedom if I lied and agreed to spying."

At this point, Saberi was cut off from the world. She had one phone call to make to her boyfriend, but they had never arranged any "secret code" if she was in trouble. She tried to hint to him that she was in danger, but he didn't make the connection. "I was on my own," Saberi said. The option she was given, if she didn't confess to espionage, was everything from ten years in Evin to being given a death sentence. She had seen coerced con-



Roger Cohen and Roxana Saberi at the Times Center.

fessions on television and knew that once prisoners were released, they often recanted their confession. She decided that this was what she would do: confess to whatever they wanted, agree to spy, and then, once released from prison, she'd deny it all.

"Fear overcame me," she said. "I was just planning to be freed." But the release didn't come.

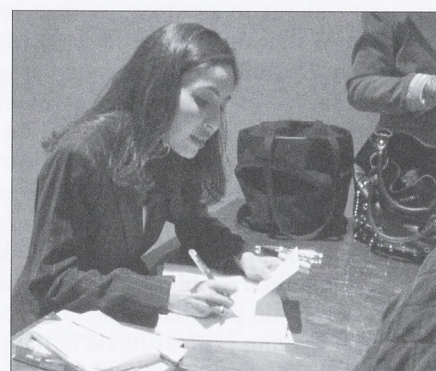
Cohen said, recollecting from her book, "what you did didn't sit well. The lies broke you in a way."

For four days Saberi said she could not get past the feeling of shame. She met other political prisoners and stayed up at night thinking God was somehow punishing her. But then she had an epiphany. She recanted her story in front of a judge and took the risk of truth.

"I could have not done it without my cellmates," she said. "I didn't want to fear death and mankind anymore. My dad said to me on the phone, 'remember, they can't hurt your soul.'"

Saberi was imprisoned for five months in Iran. Through a series of negotiations with news agencies and a coalition of international government pressure, an appeals court reduced her eight-year jail sentence to a two-year suspended term and she was released on May 11, 2009. On June 12, 2009, the Iranian elections took place, and the aftermath. Cohen asked if there will be a fundamental change in Iran in her lifetime.

"Not structural change," she said. "[Obama's] outreach is important because it drives hardliners up the wall, because they can say 'it's not our fault.' The door for negotiations and dialogue has to be open, but at the same time, human rights should be a first-tier issues, not a second or third."



Saberi signed copies of her book after the event.

A Silver Lining in the "Death Knell" of Foreign News

EVENT RECAP: APRIL 9

by Michael O. Allen

A person could be forgiven thinking Ben Johnson's seat was spring-loaded the way he launched himself at the panel of experts that the OPC organized recently to discuss The Crisis in Foreign News Reporting.

The OPC presented the panel as part of "Surviving the Storm: How to Weather the Tough Times in Journalism," the theme of the Society of Professional Journalists' 2010 Spring Conference. Hosted by the Deadline Club and the Connecticut and New Jersey professional chapters of SPJ, the conference brought hundreds of journalists from around the nation to the City University of New York Graduate School of Journalism's midtown Manhattan campus.

Johnson, a senior at Southern Connecticut State University about to graduate with a journalism degree, said that William Holstein, president of the OPC Foundation; Dorinda Elliott, a member of the OPC Board; Marcus Mabry, *New York Times* associate national editor; and veteran foreign correspondent Craig R. Whitney, who retired recently after 44 years at *The New York Times*, all gave very useful advice. Although the panel was charged with discussing changes in international news reporting over the past generation, particularly as news organizations continue their wholesale retreat from covering international news, the panelists were very encouraging to the students and young professionals in the room.

"What we're saying to you is it's a sacred craft," Holstein said at one point, "it's a sacred calling we've been involved in, being the eyes and ears of the American democracy on the ground in a place where something important was happening and it was our job to explain that to an American audience."

It might have been an unfair statement for a graybeard to make to a young, idealistic, and highly impressionable group of people.

"I'm inspired, absolutely," Johnson said. "It's really eye opening. I liked it a lot. It was really great to have people of that caliber working in foreign correspondence position. I've always been interested in that as a potential career option down the road. So this really gave me inspiration."

Mabry managed the difficult task of being both brutally honest about the bleak outlook for young people aspiring to become foreign correspondent, yet encouraging them at the same time that it is not a hopeless ambition.

"There are fewer foreign correspondents jobs. So? But there are foreign correspondents jobs and there will continue to be foreign correspondents jobs. If you are dedicated, you could be one of those foreign correspondents. That's what it's about," he said.

Holstein had noted at the start of the late afternoon event that his audience was "mostly the young, early career."

"Our mission is to give you a presentation about the

crisis in America's coverage of the world," he said. "It may be that what you want to hear more about is how to get started in this career, if we haven't scared you off by then."

Each panelist managed to balance every bit of bad news they imparted with something either encouraging, or inspirational.

Elliott was insistent that those who aspire to a career as a foreign correspondent should first learn a language, then go to a place where they could put that language to use and get to work. That was what she did as a young person leaving school. She studied Chinese and, upon graduation, applied to "a zillion" newspapers and magazines in Asia for jobs. She got "a zillion rejections."

One acceptance was from *The Asia Wall Street Journal*, which offered a post in Hong Kong on the graveyard shift working from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., thus was launched a classic foreign correspondent's experience. Elliott, who married Adi Ignatius of *The Wall Street Journal* and raised three children overseas, would serve in Beijing and Moscow, among other outposts, for *BusinessWeek* and *Newsweek*.

Holstein and Mabry followed the path of being hired domestically by their respective news organizations before their eventual posting overseas. Mabry joined *Newsweek* as a business reporter before being posted as a correspondent to Paris, later becoming bureau chief, then chief of correspondents.

Holstein started with United Press International in Lansing, Michigan, then coming to New York after expressing interest in becoming a foreign correspondent. In the late 1970s, President Jimmy Carter normalized U.S. relations with China.

"They needed more young meat to throw at the story so I was soon on the plane to Hong Kong," Holstein said. "I spent two years covering the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the OPEC summit in Bali, Indonesia, the Tokyo Economic Summit in 1979, and, subsequently, was transferred to Beijing."

Whitney's career start was both routine and startlingly unique.

As a college student, he got his journalism training by working for the Worcester (MA) Telegram as a reporter for two years. He then served a year's clerkship for legendary *New York Times* columnist "Scotty" James Reston. But, with his draft board breathing down his neck,



Dinda Elliott



Craig Whitney



Marcus Mabry



William J. Holstein

(Continued on Page 15)

Japan Hands Reunion

(Continued From Page 11)

in Tokyo, 1952-1956, and United Press International, 1963-1972. Richard Pyle, Associated Press, Asia News Editor, Tokyo, 1979-1987, and life member of the FCCJ, Calvin Sims, *The New York Times*, Tokyo correspondent, 1999-2001. And chaired by Bill Holstein, OPC board member and OPC Foundation President who covered Japan extensively during the 1990s. The OPC's steering committee identified more than 200 former Japan hands all over the world. The FCCJ wrote a message of congratulations for the reunion.

More reunion photos are online at www.opcofamerica.org/japanhands.

A Whirl of History for a Legend in Journalism

(Continued From Page 12)

Taliban for training and jobs, which Topping said is "absolutely vital." "There's no winning in Afghanistan if you can't create a stable environment," he said.

Holstein asked about the role of media today and if traditional media is in a "retreat" mode.

"One lesson we should've learned in Asia and in the Middle East is that we've had government lies and cover ups and taken action without Constitutional Authority," Topping said. "It's necessary to have a fourth state. The press that's always checking on the three branches and laying out what's happening so Americans know how to vote and protect their interests. Staffs are being cut, budgets slashed,

presses are have great difficulties to safeguard our national security."

When asked what story he'd chase now if he were just starting out as a reporter, Topping said, "A single issue of national security, the nuclear story. The possibility of an Israeli strike of Iranian facilities, nuclear proliferation in North Korea. These stories relate to the well being of us all. It's a great challenge that national security reporters now face."

Many former colleagues and friends came out to hear Topping discuss his book and life, many in the crowd — Richard Pyle, Ralph Blumenthal to name a few — asked questions and gave their congratulations for the book. Four of the Topping's five daughters were also in attendance.

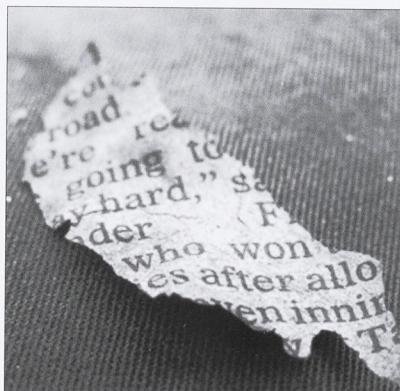
A Silver Lining in the Alleged Death Knell of International Reporting

(Continued From Page 14)

Whitney joined the U.S. Navy in 1965. He spent three years as an officer in the Navy, two of those years writing speeches in Washington and then a year in Saigon as a press escort officer. That year enabled him to move all over Vietnam, in all the battle areas.

On getting out, Whitney was set to start at *The Times* as reporter on the Federal Court beat when then Managing Editor Seymour Topping asked if he would like to return to Vietnam as a foreign correspondent for the *Times*.

"What I'd always wanted to do since I got into jour-



nalism is be a foreign correspondent," Whitney said. "I spoke French, had studied French and German. Ironically, it was the Navy that got me my foreign correspondent's job."

But, no matter how they started, one aspect of each of these distinguished journalists' career would be hard to duplicate by many of their very interested audience members: the fully paid and subsidized staff position at a major news organization. The "Gravy Train," as Elliott described, has ended.

She even had two housing subsidies because of her husband's position, "all kinds of comforts that companies just don't have the money for these days."

Mabry remembers, as a 25-year-old foreign correspondent for *Newsweek*, serving champagne and foie gras to a group of sources at his Paris house, which overlooked the Seine River. Later, as chief of correspondents in charge of magazine's foreign coverage budget, he would rein in such expenses for correspondents.

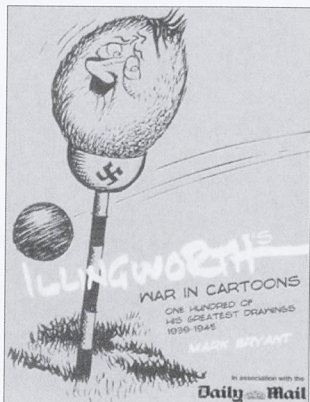
Where every network had a full-fledge bureau, news organizations that even have a presence tend to depend on locals for facts on the ground, including video and audio. Yet, Elliott said, not only is a career as a foreign correspondent doable but "you cannot possibly have a more exciting life than going overseas and covering the world."

The OPC Foundation does its part by giving 12 scholarships annually and honoring the winners at its annual scholarship luncheon where they are introduced to people in the media, take tours of media companies and coordinate internships abroad.

Michael O. Allen, a former journalist, now runs his website michaeloallen.com.

New Books: (Continued From Page 16)

War in Cartoons [London: Grub Street Publishing]. Illingworth is described in the forward to the book: "One of his great advantages was that he had actually seen Hitler and Goering in person which made his drawings more vivid and accurate. Hitler is shown as an over-active maniac and Goering as a relentless juggernaut. These patriotic cartoons remind you of their powerful impact when our country was fighting for its life." After drawing cartoons for 50 years, Illingworth died 30 years ago at age 78.



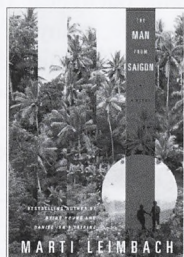
— by Al Kaff

New Books

ASIA

THE AUTHOR HAS NEVER been in Vietnam nor interviewed a single veteran of the Vietnam War. But **Marti Leimbach** read many books about the Vietnam War before she wrote *The Man From Saigon* [New York: Doubleday]. In an e-mail to this columnist, Leimbach wrote, "Everything I learned about the country I learned through what I read in books or saw in photograph albums. It is embarrassing to admit this — writers are always told to write about what they know — but I am not writing about war in *The Man From Saigon*, but about a few particular people in a specific time during a war that appears to have been so many different things, depending on who you were and where you were placed."

Leimbach's inter-



Marti Leimbach

est in women correspondents captured during the war, the central plot in her novel, was inspired in 2006 when she read about **Cathy Leroy's** capture and release by the North Vietnamese in *The Cat From Hue*. Leimbach read about other women correspondents captured by the Communists, **Kate Webb** and **Michele Ray**. Leimbach's said her description of life in a hospital that served both Montagnards and soldiers is indebted to **Hilary Smith's** *Lighting Candles: Hospital Memories of Vietnam Montagnards*. Marti read many other books including *A Piece of My Heart: The Stories of Twenty-Six American Women Who Served in Vietnam* by **Keith Walker**; *War Torn: Stories of War from the Women Reporters Who Covered Vietnam* by **Tad Bartimus**, **Denby Fawcett**, **Jurate Kazickas**, **Edith Lederer**, **Ann Bryan Mariano**, **Anne Morrissy Merick**, **Laura Palmer**, **Kate Webb** and **Tracy Wood**; and *Reporting Vietnam*, a two-volume anthology of Vietnam War writing.

Leimbach's novel tells what happens when reporter Susan Gifford, an English girl and a fictional character, is sent to Vietnam in 1967 by the American "women interest" magazine she works for. Her editor tells her to cover "orphans, hospitals, brave young GIs, gallant doctors, heroic captains, courageous American-loving civilians ... [but] no dying." Susan teams up with a Vietnamese photographer and meets an American TV correspondent whose

broadcasts she had admired back in the States. Soon after they meet, she falls in bed with him, the start of their affair. But Susan and the Vietnamese photographer are captured by three Vietcong soldiers who take them on a long trek through the jungle. Her American lover eventually searches for them.

Although she has never seen Vietnam, Leimbach vividly describes scenes familiar to any Vietnam War correspondent — steaming jungles, stinking Saigon streets, the view of bombings from the roof of Saigon's Caravelle Hotel, noisy and dangerous helicopter rides, and the 5 o'clock folies. The author, 46, lives in England with her husband and their two children, and she teaches at Oxford University's creative writing program. Leimbach is the author of *Daniel Isn't Talking*, a 2006 novel about an autistic boy that she wrote five years after her own son was diagnosed with autism.

EUROPE

HE WAS KNOWN AS THE "cartoonists' cartoonist." After drawing political cartoons for the *Western Mail* in Cardiff, Wales, and *Punch* magazine, **Leslie Illingworth** joined the *Daily Mail* and drew more than 1,000 cartoons for the London newspaper during World War II. His wartime cartoons were collected by **Mark Bryant** of the London Press Club and published in *Illingworth's*

(Continued on Page 15)

Coming Up...

Book Night
Ian Johnson
A Mosque in Munich
May 11 at 6 p.m.
at Club Quarters

For More OPC
Awards Gala
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